Literary News and Criticism

Calling a Spade a Spade in Modern Verse.

THE EVERLASTING MERCY AND THE WIDOW IN THE BYE STREET. By John Masefield. 12mo, pp. 230. The Macmillan Company.

MOODS, SONGS AND DOGGERELS. By John Galsworthy. 12mo, pp. xi, 111. Charles Scribner's Sons.

A fragment of conversation in a recent novel neatly hits off the impatience provoked by much modern verse. One of the speakers protests against the violence done to her nerves by "those irritating words that I knew were coming, like 'porphyry,' 'empyrean,' 'bower' and 'nymph.'" We all know that irritation. Never is it inflicted upon us by the masters. Since they use words for purposes of expression, all the words they use are welcome. But in the hands of the minor poet, especially the minor poet who fancies himself, the finest words in the language become intolerable. Inevitably there has been a reaction

JOHN MASEFIELD.
(From a photograph in "The English Review.")

against verbal preciosities, and of late it has been strongly nourished by the tendencies in fiction and in drama. The writer who thinks there is something talismanic about the process of calling a spade a spade is always with us, but where he has been wont to invoke the name of Art in support of his plain speech he now rests his claim upon the broad back of Humanity. The poetry of pity is nothing if not candid. The poets are sorry, terribly sorry, for the woes of mankind; they deal not in porphyry, but in sordid clay, and, having no nonsense about them, they propose that the stuff in which they deal shall color their diction, though it may color that diction but a painful drab.

Mr. John Masefield is a good type of the current school. In the first of the two poems of which his new volume is composed he relates the experience of a poaching ne'er-do-weel who battles in the prize ring with one of his cronies, gets very drunk after this performance, then runs amuck among his fellow villagers, and, being all the time much distressed in his mind, ends up repentant under the admonitions of a compassionate young Quakeress. Thus the narrative set forth in "The Everlasting Mercy" begins:

From '41 to '51
I was my folks' contrary son;
I bit my father's hand right through
And broke my mother's heart in two.
I sometimes go without my dinner
Now that I know the times I've gi'n her.

Through nearly a hundred pages the tale continues in this blunt vein, and it is to be said to the author's credit that substance and form are well matched; one of the laws of poetry, at any rate, is perfectly fulfilled. Mr. Masefield tells his story so that every development in it is absolutely clear. The character of Saul Kane is revealed in action and is made understandable almost if not quite down to the end. Indeed, there is something credible about the illumination that invades him when the Quakeress speaks, though her intervention, with its overwhelming effect, smacks a little of that unreality which we associate with the visits of the god from the machine. "Something broke inside my brain," exclaims Saul, and turns over a new leaf. Well, regeneration often comes that way amongst the Saul Kanes of this world. As a tract "The Everlasting Mercy" has an undeniable force.

The same value attaches to "The Widow in the Bye Street," wherein a harmless lad living with his poor, widowed mother is beguiled by a hussy and so lured to a murderer's end. There is a deeper pathos in this poem, fed, of course, from the spring at the old woman's heart, and again Mr. Masefield closely suits his craftsmanship to his theme. Witness the following picture, a picture both vivid and tender, of the two in their forlorn home on the eve of tragic things:

And there they sat of evenings after dark
Singing their song of "Binger." He and she,
Her poor old cackle made the mongrels bark
And "You sing Binger, mother," carols he;
"By crimes, but that's a good song, that her be":
And then they slept there in the room they shared,
And all the time fate had his end prepared.

One thing alone made life not perfect sweet:
The mother's daily fear of what would come
When woman and her lovely boy should meet,
When the new wife would break up the old home.
Fear of that unborn evil struck her dumb,
And when her darling and a woman met,
She shook and prayed, "Not her, O God! not yet."

It is impossible to contemplate this interior without a certain sympathy, and, in fact, as the drama which lays it in ruins moves naturally and steadfastly to its cruel climax, we cannot but confess ourselves touched. Unfortunately, we are touched by this poem as by the other, not poetically, but as through a purely tractarian fervor.

Why are we thus disillusioned? The fault lies entirely, we fear, with Mr. Masefield. There is, of course, nothing in his subjects inimical to the composition of poetry. His realism has the sanction of more than one great name in English verse. Cowper, it is true, deliberately rejected the more sinister types of human frailty—though not, we may add, without paying his compliments to them in lines that are weighty and still live—but Crabbe, from whom Mr. Masefield consciously or unconsciously de[illegible], fixed permanently enough a standard in these matters and gives to our contemporary young poet all the countenance he needs. Only the author of "The Parish Register" and the "Tales of the Hall" did more than moralize his realism, he poetized it, and gave it a charm strong enough to triumph even over the jog-trot of his couplets. "Omar" Fitz Gerald, who doted on Crabbe, has a good saying about him in one of his letters. "I doubt not," the passage runs, "that Mr. Woodberry is quite right in what he says of Crabbe not having Imagination to draw that Soul from Nature of which he enumerates the phenomena; but he at any rate does so enumerate and select them as to suggest something more to his Reader, something more than mere catalogue could suggest." Could the indefinable be brought nearer than this to the point of definition? If it is hard to say what it is that constitutes true poetry it is surely quite as hard to tabulate those omissions which leave so much of modern verse high and dry. We can guess what might have been made of "The Widow in the Bye Street" by Crabbe in England, by Villon in France, and we can kindle to the thought. But what Mr. Masefield has made of it, though humanly interesting, leaves us, poetically speaking, with pulse unquickened.

Without making any invidious comparison we may reasonably cite Mr. Galsworthy's "Moods, Song and Doggerels" as shedding a little further light on this subject. He, like Mr. Masefield, is moved by man's unhappiness. The pity of it stirs him, and stirs him the more poignantly inasmuch as he has no high faith to offer to his reader, but only a kind of stern, pagan courage. His dead woman, who died for love and lies out under the heather, asks for no tombstone screed. "Soon to glory shall she rise," but is content, we gather, just with "deathless peace." Here is a poem which might be said to express in a few lines all of Mr. Galsworthy's philosophy:

THE PRAYER.

If on a Spring night I went by
And God were standing there,
What is the prayer that I would cry
To Him? This is the prayer:
O Lord of Courage grave,
O Master of this night of Spring!
Make firm in me a heart too brave
To ask Thee anything!

It sums up all his thought but not all his feeling, and there it is that we find him setting a profitable example for writers like Mr Masefield. Mr. Galsworthy has a sense of beauty. Nature appeals to him, so that landscape and the magic of the wind can take him out of himself and hasten his speech in that strange fashion which turns prosaic observation to a finer purpose, gives reverie the fillip of emotion and transmutes description into song. We choose here, at random, two more pieces from Mr. Gainsworthy's book:

SILVER POINT.

Sharp against a sky of grey
Pigeon's nest in naked tree;
All the silver twigs up-curled,
All the leafy spirits furled:
Not a breath to fan the day!

World aspiring and severe,
Not a hum of fly or bee,
Not a song, and not a cry,
Not a perfume stealing by;
Stillest moment of the year!

WIND.

Wind, wind—heather gypsy,
Whistling in my tree!
All the heart of me is tipsy
On the sound of thee.
Sweet with scent of clover,
Salt with breath of sea,
Wind, wind—wayman lover,
Whistling in my tree!

We would not make too much of these lyrics. They are, to be sure, the veriest trifles. But they will serve to enforce the point that the instinct for beauty will help a man to some sort of poetical expression. There is nothing on which he may not wreak it. The poaching pugilist is as legitimate an object of its exercise as the wan lover or the melodious nightingale. But without that instinct the poet may as well stay inarticulate, for without it no illusion can be created, and, as Matthew Arnold long ago told us, in poetry the illusion, the divine illusion, is everything.

THE NEW NORTHWEST

Its Possibilities as a White Men's Country.

THE ARCTIC PRAIRIES. A Canoe Journey of 2,000 Miles in Search of the Caribou. Being the Account of a Voyage to the Region North of Aylmer Lake. By Ernest Thompson Seton. Illustrated. 8vo, pp. xvi, 415. Charles Scribner's Sons.

The results of Mr. Seton's expedition to the Great Lone Land—the far northwest of Canada and the arctic prairies—are numerous. Primarily he went to study the caribou in their primitive condition, to complete the shore line of Lake Aylmer and to explore its sister lake, Clinton-Colden, but, enthusiastic and trained observer that he is, he brought back information about a mass of other things, not the least of them being his conclusion that even in those remoter northern regions the white man will make his home and prosper. Agriculture is possible there, he maintains, reminding us of the days when the Red River region, which is now one of the country's richest grain fields, was considered as too cold for cultivation. The timber there is an asset of the greatest commercial importance, and as for the winter, its length seems to be no greater than in Manitoba, while, moreover, he assumes that with the constant turning of the soil by the cultivator, and its consequent absorption of heat, summer frosts will disappear. And as for livestock, there are the reindeer, and especially the yak, which thrive where range cattle cannot live. The yak's flesh is "merely beef, more finely grained," and its milk is said to be rich. It is tame, and can be crossed with any breed of domestic cattle.

Thus far Mr. Seton's most practical conclusions, which, coming from him, carry great weight. The sportsman-naturalist and the lover of life in the open will find in his book much reading after their own heart, and considerable curious information concerning the "ebb and flow" of animal life, the periodic scarcity and abundance of certain forms of animal life. North of the Saskatchewan, he says, the antelope will be exterminated by the fencing of the tracks of the Canadian Pacific Railroad, which cuts them off from their summer feeding grounds. With all this, the author is not unmindful of human nature among the half-breeds and Indians he encountered on the way. The sportsman who would follow in his footsteps is warned to engage white men for his expedition, not Indians. They will be found more satisfactory in every way; an Indian guide will suffice. Also, beware of the mother of the wolverine cub. She is far deadlier than the she bear.

The abruptness of the timber line in mountainous regions is well known. The cessation of forest growth in the level Far North is no less sudden and complete:

The last woods is a wonderfully biological point or line; this ultimate arm of the forest does not die away gradually with uncertain edges and in steadily dwindling trees. The latter have sent their stoutest champions to the front, or produced, as by a final effort, some giants for the line of battle. And that line, with its sentinels, is so marked that one can stand with a foot on the territory of each combatant, or, as scientists call them, the Arctic Region and the Cold Temperate.

The arctic timber line is also the death line of the ant. In addition to many photographs—Mr. Seton went hunting buffalo and caribou and musk ox with a camera, not always successfully—there are numerous interesting specimens of his skill with the pencil.

MARK HANNA

The Portrait of a Business Man and Politician.

MARCUS ALONZO HANNA. His Life and Work. By Herbert Croly. Illustrated. 8vo, pp. xiii, 495. The Macmillan Company.

Mr. Croly has performed a difficult task with fairness and discrimination. An authorized biographer, he is in his personal opinions far removed as to political principles and ethical concepts from the subject of his work, but he brings to the latter a sympathetic understanding of Mark Hanna as a man and of the background of American life which produced him. With little of extenuation and naught of fulsome praise, he portrays a personality compact of faults and virtues, and, withal, very human.

Mark Hanna has come to be regarded in general as the extreme exponent of business domination in politics. By his enemies he was caricatured as the type of the greedy and remorseless plutocrat and symbolized as the personification of the dollar mark. To his friends he appeared the defender of sound business methods and the worker for general national prosperity. His friends were far nearer the truth than his enemies, and the success of the caricaturist in influencing public opinion was, Mr. Croly gives us to infer, largely due to the fact that Mr. Hanna acted honestly and frankly on political and economic theories which were universal at the beginning of his career, but which were being rapidly discarded toward its close.

Mr. Hanna was a native of Ohio, and grew up under pioneer business conditions. In fact, he was a pioneer himself; not in clearing forests or navigating flatboats, but in the development of resources and in the organization of commerce. Starting as a boy in the wholesale grocery business in Cleveland, and there showing initiative, he was in a few years diverted to the iron and coal business. He explored mines, built steamboats and extended his connections until he became one of the business leaders of the lake region, but he never became a "trust man" or a part of the great industrial combinations which have come to occupy so large a place in American business life. His business had vast ramifications, but his relations to it were essentially personal. He was rooted in the soil of Cleveland. He invested in enterprises less from cool calculation of money making than from a healthy human impulse to take hold of things which came to his hand and make them successful. He never became a homeless financier. He was the type of the successful business man of the 70's and 80's, loyal to time-honored traditions in business and politics, eager for success, generous in personal dealings, true to friends, fair to enemies, making no sharp distinction between private and public interest, and firmly believing that whatever promoted the prosperity of individuals promoted the welfare of the whole country. He had not arrived at that class consciousness so diligently preached in later years, which saw in the prosperity of great enterprises only a narrowing of the opportunity of the average man.

Mr. Hanna accepted political conditions as he found them. He was not a reformer or an abstract idealist. Having come fortuitously into control of a Cleveland street railway, he at first fought political attacks, but soon yielded to the conditions of municipal corruption which confronted him. As his field of influence widened he likewise accepted the political practices existing in both parties. He believed in party organization; he believed that the interests of his country were bound up in his party's success. Patronage was a legitimate instrument of political warfare. Money was necessary to organization. He himself gave freely, and in the management of campaigns he openly developed and carried to perfection the system of assessing business interests for the promotion of policies believed essential to prosperity. Mr. Croly acquits him of all charges of vote buying, either for himself or others, or of any understanding that the more perfect his system, however legitimate it seemed to him, the more surely must it in the end weaken the consideration for material prosperity in the minds of the electorate. Mr. Hanna considered it the duty of financiers to protect the country from economic dangers, but he was scrupulous about accepting contributions which implied particular favors, and returned them when they came his way. While seeking to promote the nomination of Mr. McKinley, he was at first inclined to make specific promises as to patronage, and even as to Cabinet offices, but this his chief would not tolerate. In the second McKinley campaign his relations with the President, for the only time in their lives, became somewhat constrained, because the President refused to permit the use of government machinery for political purposes in ways which had long been familiar, and which Mr. Hanna thought quite legitimate. He himself, however, was ready in both campaigns, as soon as temporary irritation wore off, to pay tribute to Mr. McKinley's character, and to say that the President's conscientiousness was teaching him to be a better man.

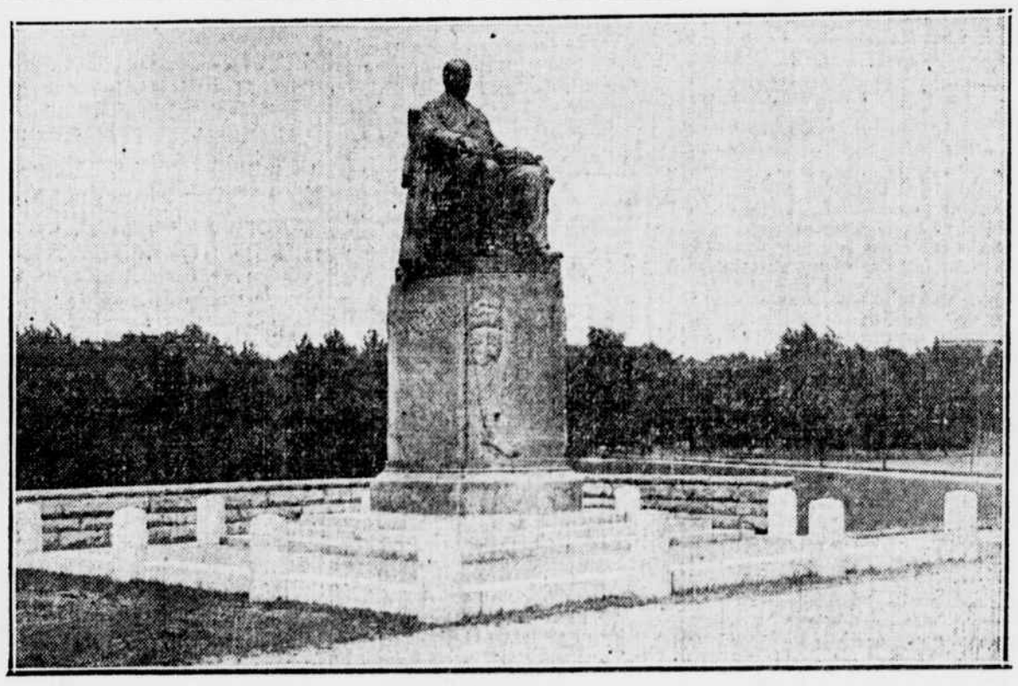
Aside from his political activities, Mr. Hanna's most conspicuous public work was in connection with the Civic Federation. Though generally pictured as a ruthless plutocrat, he was, in fact, most sympathetic to labor. In his early life he had experience with one strike accompanied with violence, and throughout his business career thereafter he made it a point to deal frankly with his men, to see them and listen to all their complaints, and there was no more popular employer than he. He was drawn into the Civic Federation unwillingly, but, once becoming interested, he devoted himself with great energy and success to the settlement of industrial disputes, to persuading employers, especially the coal operators, to adopt a more conciliatory attitude toward the unions, and he firmly believed that if the wage earners and employers could thus be brought together the comforts of that business prosperity to which he was devoted could be equitably distributed and good feeling could be made to prevail. If that was an inadequate remedy for industrial unrest, it does not detract from the credit due to Mr. Hanna for trying to adapt his inherited tradition of business enterprises and material national welfare to the needs of a new day. He believed in big business, believed in it honestly and disinterestedly, and cherished to the end the notion that if the proper human relationship such as he himself maintained could be established between the great captains of industry and their employes the country as a whole would benefit by the free aggregation of capital.

Mr. Croly traverses in detail the career of Mr. Hanna as political manager, Senator and potential Presidential candidate, drawing a picture of a man of great ability and practical efficiency and of continually expanding usefulness. His faults are not blinked; on the contrary, they are even baldly set forth, but through them we see the human quality of the man, his steadfast honesty according to his conceptions, his disinterestedness and his charm which, on personal contact, almost invariably converted those who had been led to believe him some sort of a monster. The author says:

Mr. Hanna's personality and career had an essentially social value, which the opponents of his political and economic opinions should be the last to ignore. He gave a highly individual expression both to the practical aspect of pioneer Americanism and to its really underlying tendency. The aggressive and sometimes unscrupulous individualism of the pioneer was redeemed by the conviction that in doing well for himself he was also doing well for society. The pioneer honestly identified and confused individual and social interests, and he was honestly concerned as much for the one as for the other. The society in which he was interested was not an abstract, remote entity. It was a living group of men and women, whom one liked or disliked, helped or hindered, and who aroused in one another an essentially neighborly interest. His hopes and aspirations of a better social state was an extension of the actual goodwill which he felt toward his associates individually and as a body.

In this region, also, Mark Hanna helps us to understand the pioneer American, and the pioneer helps us to understand Mark Hanna. Personal ties and associations composed the substance of his life. During each successive phase of his career he made a few enemies and many friends. He made enemies because he had to fight his way to his goal. He made friends because he could make his own the interests of other men. He was building up a better society in his own vicinity by treating his associates as he would like to be treated by them. According to his own lights he always played fair—not merely toward his friends, not merely toward his business associates and employes, not merely toward his political associates, but toward his personal constituents and toward public opinion. This spirit of fair play is characteristic of pioneer Americanism and constitutes its best legacy to a future American society. . . . The economic and political system advocated by Mr. Hanna may not make for social fair play; but any one who rejects the system should be the more willing to recognize the good faith of the man. His personal behavior toward other men was directed toward the realization of those social values, the promotion of which is declared to be the object of a better system. If he was lacking, as his critics have declared, in idealism, the deficiency was at least partly due to the very reality of a certain ideal element in his own life. An impulse toward a better quality of human association was instinctive with him. When, if ever, Mark Hanna's way of behavior toward his fellows becomes common instead of rare, we shall not need so much reform or so many reformers.

Mr. Croly reveals little that is new of the political history of the times, and almost nothing of the intimate relationship between Mr. McKinley and Mr. Hanna, perhaps because almost all of their transactions were carried on by personal interviews and scarcely a trace of correspondence between them exists.



MARK HANNA.
(From the monument at Cleveland, by Augustus Saint-Gaudens, sculptor, and Henry Bacon, architect.)

HUMOR

An International Collection of Good Material.

WHY THE WORLD LAUGHS. By Charles Johnston. Illustrated. 8vo, pp. 389. Harper & Bros.

Mr. Johnston offers us in this book no philosophic treatise on the nature of humor, though for a moment he approaches this side of his subject when he come to analyze our own form of it, assuring us, in this connection, that the levity, the irreverence, that is one of its potent elements, is truly native, being found in the humor of the American native as well as in that of the native American. His book is, however, mainly a collection of anecdotes, tales and proverbial wisdom that, in his opinion, most truly represent the humor of different peoples at different times, from the Egyptians, the Chinese, the ancient Hebrews, classic Greeks and Romans down to the days of Daudet, "Punch" and Mark Twain. Occasionally, of course, he wanders from humor to wit and satire.

The humor of the Persians, he finds, chiefly expresses itself in repartee, and mostly hateful repartee at that. Chinese humor is often grim; that of Scotland is apt to play with "the corp" and theology. English humor dealing with the Scot worships the "saxpence." The only woman humorist in these pages is the Lady Sei Shonagon, who flourished at the Japanese court nine hundred years ago and wrote the "Pillow Sketches." There is an Elizabethan tang about some of her saws. East Indian humor is "at once wise and courtly, mirthful and subtle, no mockery obscures reverence, and the note of humanity is never lost."

Goldsmith's dog that died was already known to the ancient Greeks: "A viper bit a Cappadocian. The viper died." The humor of the Talmud yields some good material. It was a little Jewish girl who told a certain Rabbi Joshua, when he asked her what she was carrying in her covered basket, that "If mother had wanted every one to know what was in it she would not have put a cover on it."

From the time of the Pharaohs we have the tale of the Insurgent of Joppa and the Big Stick, which Mr. Johnston retells as appropriate to the present hour. The real Turk's joke must have a horse in it, as befits the descendant of mounted conquerors. Spanish humor to this day testifies to the fidelity to type of Sancho Panza. Falstaff may stand for the type of mediæval German humor, which, curiously enough, chose as its first hero, or butt, an exiled English Parson Ameis. The absent-minded German professor of modern days is remembered, but the humor of German army life is passed by. John Bull, in his comic and his amiable aspect, may be found in essence in Chaucer's Summoner and Franklin of "The Canterbury Tales," opines Mr. Johnston. And Irish humor is mostly wit—the truth unconsciously stated in a bull.

The examples from many sources given here all have the underlying value of being universally understandable. No local humor, which requires explanation to foreigners, is included. The examples of proverbial wisdom scattered by Mr. Johnston through his pages are an added delight. Of course, the wisdom of mankind, the fruit of its experience of life, differs only little in substance, but greatly in its expression, its figures. It is the Japanese—whether old or new—who startle us with the saying that "Money makes one comfortable, even in sheol." The Chinese aver that "It is not the wine that makes the man drunk; it is the man himself," and they also say, "Don't pull up your shoe in your neighbor's melon patch; don't fix your hat under your neighbor's plum tree." When the Arab wishes to describe a case of obstinacy he says: "It is a goat, even if it does fly." And there is a telling touch in his proverb, "The bug is a beauty to its mother." The ancient Egyptian advice, "Do not build your tomb higher than your betters," holds good to this day in many forms and among all peoples. "The horse dies; the racetrack remains," says the Turk, and also, "A fall from a donkey hurts more than a fall from a horse." According to Mr. Johnston it was Brian Boru who told the invading Norsemen that it was hereditary in his family to die. A most diverting book, which is the result of much serious work.

IN POLYGLOT LAND

The Camping Tour of a Wise Pair.

IN THE CARPATHIANS. By Lion Phillimore. 8vo, pp. 348. Henry Holt & Co.

"It was luxury to lie free and uncramped under the open sky while æsceticism lay in enduring stuffiness within four walls." This was the conclusion at which, near the end of a camping tour in Central Europe, the author of this volume arrived. The reader who falls under its spell cannot dispute that conclusion or this other one found at the close of a chapter of adventure: "Those who sleep always in beds and whose nights are never broken by the discomforts of poverty know little of the freedom and kindliness of the world." Both these blessings did the Phillimores, husband and wife, encounter during their slow, two months' journey. They started from Zakopane, on the Polish-Hungarian frontier, with an excellent honey colored horse, a covered cart, a handsome Polish boy to take care of the same and a load of pots, pans and tinned provisions, not forgetting sleeping "valises" and a sleeping tent. The young Pole was exchanged for an older factotum midway, and a friendly dog was annexed, otherwise the travellers went on with personnel and paraphernalia unaltered through a bit of Gallicia, Eastern Hungary and Transylvania, "a polyglot land, with its many peoples and different customs."

Good camping places in these mountain regions they almost always found. Wood for the fire was abundant and pure water was at hand for drinking and bathing. A favorite occupation of the author, apparently, was sitting on a hot day in the middle of a cold, clean, rapid river. It was a country of herds, and milk, if not cream, was generally attainable in the evening milking hour—and this with vegetables, bread, tea and honey formed "the chief of their diet." They bought supplies in the primitive villages—sometimes under interesting circumstances. There was the old shopkeeper who rushed after the departing cart, calling upon the travellers to stop:

The crowd hurriedly collected again to hear her complaint. What had the foreigners stolen? The old lady reached us and her voice rose from the middle of the crowd, demanding her weight.

"What weight?" asked Bobby.

"In the sugar," said the old lady pressing closer.

"What sugar?" said Bobby.

"My sugar," exclaimed Milak. "I bought loaf sugar."

"The weight is in the sugar. I made a mistake," said the old lady, perfectly unembarrassed. Then growing impatient at our lack of comprehension.

"Am I to wait all day? Give me the bag," she snapped, ill-tempered, and Milak, puzzled, hunted amongst the parcels and handed her a blue paper bag.

An obliging and comprehending neighbor produced a bowl and the old lady tumbled the sugar into it, and with the sugar fell a brass weight of some three or four ounces.

"That's it," said the old lady, seizing it. "I forgot to take it out," and without turning a hair or showing even a shadow of the blush of shame, she emptied our sugar back into the bag, handed it to us, and departed with her weight. We drove round the corner and were out of the village before we thoroughly understood. Then Milak observed musingly: "It must have weighed a good many lumps of sugar."

But cheatery like this was rare; and the assertion pressed upon the English pair at starting, that the peasants were dangerous, proved to be without foundation. Night after night on the wild countryside there came to their campfire herdsmen, gypsies or road makers, men who sat and smoked and talked, and sometimes accepted a share of the simple food, and sometimes—though evidently hungry—politely declined it. Only once did two suspicious visitors loom out of the dark and retreat into it again, giving the travellers a night of worry; and once a drunken village headman demanded their papers with ugly insistence. Of every little incident of life in these unfrequented places the author makes the most. She has humor and sentiment and a feeling for human nature and for scenery which she expresses with picturesque simplicity. The plainest story of wandering through a region so little known must inevitably be of interest; here we have a record fascinating in its gayety and its sympathetic apprehension of what is winning in alien races.

THE AMERICAN NEGRO

A Useful Book About Him for French Readers.

Paris, April 11.

Mr. Warrington Dawson, an American journalist, long resident in Paris, was born and brought up amid negroes in South Carolina, and has since studied them in Africa. He has just published, through the Librarie Orientale et Americaine, a volume on "Le Negre aux Etats Unis," with a preface by Paul Adam. This volume, which is dedicated to the Duchesse de Rohan, is a painstaking

JOHN GALSWORTHY.
(From a photograph in "The English Review.")

impartial investigation of the negro problem.

The history of the American negro, beginning with the charter given in the sixteenth century by the Emperor Charles V to a Dutch slave trading company, down to the South Carolina lynching cases in June, 1911, is traced clearly; and irrelevant facts are eliminated. The psychology of the negro is illustrated by numerous episodes and incidents. Stress is laid upon the musical "esprit" of the black races, and here many facts are taken from the "Negro Elegies" collected by Mr. John Powell, of Virginia. M. Paul Adam, in his preface to "The Negro in the United States," expresses his opinion that the book will be of great value to administrators of the French possessions in Africa, because it furnishes "the best and most practical information about negro character that has appeared in France." Mr. Dawson very wisely refrains from attempting to offer solutions for the problems that he presents, and modestly confines himself to supplying facts and data by means of which a "solution" may some day be reached.

C. I. B.

BUYING HONORS.

Richard Davey, in The Morning Post.

In looking through some notes recently I came across a fresh confirmation of the old adage that there is "nothing new under the sun." In the British Museum there is a curious pamphlet, printed in Italian and entitled "Dell' Arcano del Mare," which was originally written in English in the reign of James I by Sir Robert Dudley, son of the famous Earl of Leicester, Queen Elizabeth's favorite, by his second wife, Lady Sheffield. Sir Robert, it seems, was a man of ideas, and the object of the tract in question, which is supposed to have been presented to King James, was to unfold certain helpful political schemes, the first part being devoted to "A Proposition to Bridle the Impertinency of Parliaments." The second, however, is of greater interest, and, under the heading of "Means to Increase His Majesty's Revenues," contains a suggestion which reads curiously in the light of the recent attempt to crowd the House of Lords with new peers. Sir Robert's opinion was that all new creations should be made to pay for the privilege on the following scale:

1. At the Prince's marriage all the earls to be made grandees of Spain and Princip. at £20,000 each	£500,000
2. All the barons to be made earls, at £19,000 each	
3. To ennoble two hundred of the richest commoners, as is usual in Naples:	
A duke to pay £30,000	at least £1,000,000
A marquiss 15,000	
An earl 10,000	
A viscount or baron 5,000	
(N. B.—The ancient nobility to precede all these.)	
4. To make gentlemen of low degree and rich farmers esquires, the price not named.	

It appears that the proposal was never put into effect, yet what an opportunity was missed! Perhaps, however, it may be adopted in our own time.